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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [CBW](#) [ETTC](#) [MNUC](#) [KNNP](#) [IAEA](#) [IR](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: ITALIAN REACTIONS TO USG PROPOSALS AT NUCLEAR
SUPPLIERS GROUP AND AUSTRALIA GROUP

REF: A. STATE 72818
[1](#)B. STATE 69315
[1](#)C. STATE 67462
[1](#)D. STATE 58355
[1](#)E. STATE 47311
[1](#)F. STATE 39585
[1](#)G. 06 ROME 1194

[1](#)1. (C) After a lengthy delay occasioned by the travel of the Italian official responsible for nonproliferation and export control issues and other postponements on the Italian side, Econoff recently succeeded in exchanging views on USG proposals for information sharing at the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1737 and 1747, and GOI participation in the Australia Group (AG) Plenary and Experts meetings (Refs. A-F).

NSG Information Sharing -----

[1](#)2. (C) Our contact, Carlo Tripepi, declined to formally comment on proposals for information sharing at the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) (Refs A, B, and E). He did note that increased information sharing among NSG members and between the NSG and the IAEA "could be a good idea," but said the GOI needs more information and more time to consider the proposals before taking a formal position. Tripepi noted that because of the NSG's larger membership, which includes Russia, it is sometimes more difficult to ensure the confidentiality and level of detail of information shared

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within the NSG.

Participation in AG Plenary -----

[1](#)3. (C) Tripepi expressed satisfaction with the substance of the Australia Group Plenary, noting that Italy gave presentations on the status of Iran's biological weapons programs and an update on Libya's efforts to dismantle its programs. He said the GOI is especially concerned by the development of Iran's indigenous chemical and biological weapons capabilities. Tripepi noted the GOI's position on Russian membership in the Australia Group is unchanged, and that Russia will have to meet the standard Australia Group membership criteria in order to join the group. According to Tripepi, Russian membership in the Wassenaar Arrangement and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) has not been helpful, and that Russia has blocked all decisions at the MTCR and become a barrier to cooperation between the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group.

Implementation of UNSCR 1737 and 1747 -----

¶4. (C) Tripepi noted Ref C points on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1737 and 1747, and that the GOI will implement the resolutions to their full extent. He noted the GOI is taking a close look at Italian exports to the Gulf region, with special attention being paid to the possibility of transshipment to Iran via ports in the Persian Gulf region. Tripepi added that Italy's arms export regulations are already "among the strictest in the EU."

¶5. (C) Comment. The GOI is generally been supportive of USG non-proliferation and export control initiatives. We expect that once they have had sufficient time to evaluate our proposals, the GOI will support USG proposals on information-sharing between NSG members and the IAEA. Tripepi has repeatedly expressed concern about the effect of Russian membership on the effectiveness of the various multilateral export control groups (NSG, MTCR, and Wassenaar Arrangement), noting that Russian intransigence has made many discussions in the MTCR and Wassenaar Group unproductive. End comment.
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